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Supporting Women's Meaningful Inclusion in Multi-level Peace and Transition Processes

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Political Settlements Research Programme

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Supporting Women’s Meaningful Inclusion in Multi-level Peace and Transition Processes



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In a new PA-X Spotlight Gender Series commissioned by UN Women and supported by the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development, PSRP Director Christine Bell and PSRP Researchers Laura Wise and Robert Forster explore the opportunities and challenges for supporting women's meaningful inclusion in peace and transition processes, in contexts where peace and conflict play out at multiple levels, occasionally become stalled, and proceed in complex sequences that can both help and hinder the work of gender equality advocates.

As high-level, track 1 negotiations to bring an end to devastating conflict and reach formalised political settlements in places such as Syria, Libya and Yemen, have stalled or faced repeated set-backs, gender-equality advocates are being challenged to look for new avenues to support women peacebuilders. Whilst challenges to those seeking to implement UN Security Council Resolution 1325 are not new, the potential '[end of the big peace](#)', and the shift from securing comprehensive peace agreements to more piecemeal, staggered, or localised deals in conflict-affected contexts means that practices such as reaching ceasefire deals, humanitarian assistance, interim transitions, local peace processes, and stalled negotiations, demand greater scrutiny for the potential opportunities they afford women and gender-equality advocates to push for more inclusive processes.

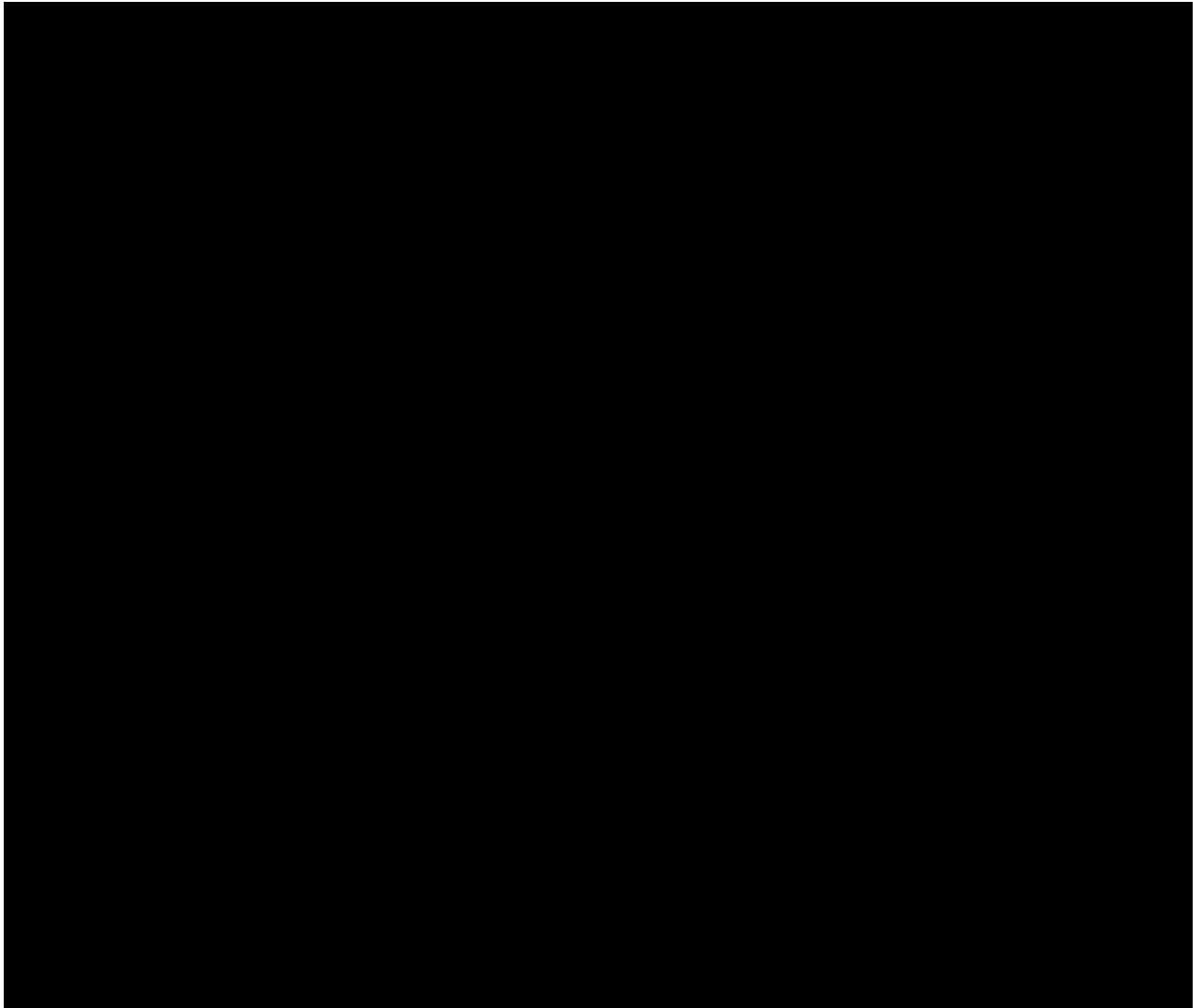
In our new PA-X Spotlight Gender Series, we address questions asked by those seeking to influence peace and transition processes to be more inclusive, by providing brief comparative material regarding these key issues, sometimes with reference to the specific context from which the question originated, and sometimes framed more generally. This Gender Series deals with questions posed by a range of actors in the MENA region, with reference to women's meaningful participation as well as gender-sensitive and responsive approaches, and draws on successful examples of inclusive practices and strategies, as well as highlighting potential barriers to greater inclusion. All six reports are currently available to read and download in English. Arabic translations of each report are forthcoming.

In **‘Women and the Renegotiation of Transitional Governance Arrangements’**, by Christine Bell and Robert Forster, we consider the opportunities and challenges for women’s representation in new governance structures resulting from the processes of ‘revising’ transitional governance arrangements that have not been implemented, or that have become outpaced by new changes in the conflict. We find that between 1990 and 2015, at least 21 different conflict zones witnessed negotiations that attempted to re-negotiate transitional governance arrangements that had been set up to put in place a transition from conflict and authoritarianism to peace, and that moments of transition offer opportunities to consider the inclusion of women. [Read now.](#)

Our Spotlight on **‘Local Peace Processes: Opportunities and Challenges for Women’s Engagement’**, by Laura Wise, Robert Forster, and Christine Bell, raises potential opportunities for women’s participation in processes and agreements that are ‘local’, as opposed to ‘national’ in character, and frames the issues which women and gender equality advocates might usefully consider when engaging with local processes on addressing the inclusion of women. We find that women have used diverse tactics to push for inclusion in local peace processes; however, local peace processes are also arenas of power and legitimacy that link to the national conflict in complicated ways, and are often understood as very contextually determined in ways that international actors should respect. Support for inclusion of women cannot therefore be taken for granted. [Read now.](#)

In **‘Gender Mainstreaming in Ceasefires: Comparative Data and Examples’**, Robert Forster and Christine Bell address the question of whether and how ceasefire agreements in armed conflict address the specific needs and interests of women, and provides examples of agreements that have integrated gender equality issues and addressed women’s participation. We find that although the number of ceasefire agreements containing gender provisions increased from 4 per cent to 18 per cent following the issuing of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 in 2000, the inclusion of gender provisions in ceasefire agreements is almost half (11 per cent) the rate of inclusion in other peace agreement types (21 per cent). [Read now.](#)

We address some of the main ways in which parties to conflict and mediators attempt to reinvigorate stalled formal (track one) negotiation processes, and sets out the inclusion challenges and opportunities for women that can arise, in **‘Re-invigorating Stalled Peace Negotiations: Challenges and Opportunities for Women’s Inclusion’**, by Christine Bell and Robert Forster. We find that there are various strategies that women and gender equality advocates can employ to push for women’s inclusion in re-invigorated processes, depending on the tactics that parties to conflict and mediators employ when a formal so-called ‘track I’ negotiation process between armed actors stalls. This Spotlight is accompanied by an animated version in [Arabic](#) and [English](#). [Read now.](#)



In '[Humanitarian Assistance and Gender Perspectives in Peace Agreements](#)', Laura Wise explores whether humanitarian assistance provisions in peace and transition processes adopt a gender perspective, reflect the diverse practices of women's involvement in frontline negotiations and humanitarian assistance, and adequately address the gendered experiences and consequences of conflict. She finds that there is an opportunity to improve the ways in which peace agreements include gender references to humanitarian assistance, without overlooking many women's experiences as agents and brokers of humanitarian assistance deals. [Read now](#).

Finally, Robert Forster conducted '[A Gender Analysis of Peace Agreements and Transitional Documents from the Libyan Transition, 2011-2018](#)'. In this Spotlight he reviews 26 peace agreements and transition documents signed in Libya between 2011 and 2018, and assesses how they provide for the inclusion of women and gender. Forster finds that while there are increased references to women and their participation in Libya's main transitional documents over time, specific provisions for women and any wider evidence of gender sensitive practices are ad hoc across Libya's national and local peace

processes, and none of the agreements are fully gender responsive or gender inclusive.
[Read now.](#)

The PA-X Spotlight Gender Series is part of the PSRP's project with UN Women, **'Enhancing Women's Leadership for Sustainable Peace in Fragile Contexts in the MENA Region'**, which supports UN Women's endeavours to contribute to building sustainable peace in the MENA region by strengthening women's leadership and participation in high level peace and transition processes. This follows an earlier series of papers written by PSRP and produced by UN Women on inclusion and political power-sharing, territorial power-sharing, security arrangements, constitutions, and transitional justice, which you can read [here](#).

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